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MEMORANDUM FOR: JOINT OSO/OPC COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

15 November 1950

FROM : Chief, Communications Division

SUBJECT : Policy on Provision of Staff Communications for OSO and OPC

1. The operations of the Communications Division are presently being hampered by the lack of a definite policy decision concerning the establishment of equal facilities to support the staff cryptographic needs of both OSO and OPC. Specifically, the outstanding problem is whether or not the Communications Division can provide actual privacy of communications for each Office at all field stations where permanently assigned representatives from both offices are established [redacted]

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2. At the present time no problem exists at stations where the volume of traffic is sufficient to warrant the assignment of a full time Communications Technician who establishes a CIA signal center which performs all of the cryptographic functions for both Offices. Under this arrangement stations authorized to handle F and G cables are provided with the necessary privacy including cable distribution. The Communications Technician, under existing authority from Headquarters, distributes cables locally according to the internal addressee letter component. He does not distribute OSO cables to OPC, and vice versa, without specific approval of the addressee in each instance.

3. A problem does exist at those stations where the traffic volume does not justify a full time Communications Technician. At such stations the responsibilities are performed by certain intelligence personnel who have been designated as "Communicators". Dependent on the size of the station and the number of personnel assigned, the "Communicator" may be, in some cases, the OSO station chief or, in a majority of cases, his secretary. If OPC establishes a representative [redacted] at a station of this type, and even though G cables are authorized for that station, actual privacy of communication is not afforded. Further, the "Communicator" would be unduly burdened with additional duties by having to serve as code clerk for both OSO and OPC.

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4. In view of the existing problems at these smaller stations, three basic plans have been reviewed as follows:

a. Separate External Links. Privacy can be afforded each Office for separate and direct communications with their representatives by establishing two separate external cryptographic links [redacted]

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This plan, while one of the easiest to implement, is not recommended for security reasons. [redacted]

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b. Separate Internal Links. Under this plan only one external link is involved but separate internal cryptographic links are provided for. This means that the designated "Communicator" performs the necessary external processing of the cables and maintains the only liaison with the coderoom of the supporting mission. Each Office would hold its separate ciphers and would perform its own encryptions and decryptions of cables. This plan, if properly executed, will provide the necessary privacy of communications and will assure the maintenance of security of the external cryptographic link.

c. Joint Internal Links. This plan calls for a joint internal cryptographic link with the "Communicator" being responsible for all cryptographic functions including the encryption and decryption of cables for both Offices. The "Communicator" would operate on a basis similar to that of a regular Communications Technician and would distribute plain text copies of cables according to the internal addressee letter component only.

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"Communicator" who, at the smaller stations, may be the station chief or his secretary, would devote much of his time in performing code clerk duties for the other Office.

5. Communications Division is desirous of having a decision made on which of the three proposed plans it should follow. Two proposed regulations are attached. Attachment A would establish the plan as indicated in paragraph 4b above. Attachment B would provide for the plan as explained in paragraph 4c above. Since Communications Division does not recommend ~~that~~ the plan described in paragraph 4a above, no proposed regulation is submitted.

6. It is requested that the Joint OSO/OPC Communications Board recommend the issuance of whichever of the two proposed regulations it feels most applicable.

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